United Nations A/57/532/Add.4

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 December 2002
English
Original: Arabic

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (d)

Environment and sustainable development: implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Walid A. **Al-Hadid** (Jordan)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 87 (see A/57/532, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 20th and 44th meetings, on 30 October and 11 December 2002. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/57/SR.20 and 44).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.17 and A/C.2/57/L.89

2. At the 20th meeting, on 30 October, the representative of Venezuela, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa" (A/C.2/57/L.17), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 56/196 of 21 December 2001 and other resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in eight parts, under the symbol A/57/532 and Add.1-7.

02-73929 (E) 171202

Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,

"*Expressing its deep appreciation* to the Government of Italy for the organization of the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention in Rome at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, from 11 to 22 November 2002,

"*Welcoming* the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, inter alia, the subsections on desertification of the Plan of Implementation of the Summit, in particular paragraph 39 (f),

"*Welcoming also* the outcomes of the second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility held in Beijing from 16 to 18 October 2002, particularly the adoption of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, as a new focal area of the Facility,

"*Recognizing* the strong commitment of the international community demonstrated at the World Summit for Sustainable Development and the second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to making the Facility a financial mechanism of the Convention and, in this regard, the need for the Conference of the Parties to the Convention as the supreme body of the Convention to take the necessary decision to that effect at its next ordinary session in 2003, so as to promote the effective implementation of the Convention,

"*Expressing its deep appreciation* for the generous offer of the Government of Cuba to host the sixth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Havana, in September 2003,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. *Welcomes* the decision taken by the second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility that the Facility shall be available to serve as a financial mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, if the Conference of the Parties to the Convention should so decide, and requests the Council of the Facility to consider any such decision of the Conference of the Parties with a view to making the necessary arrangements;

"3. *Calls upon* the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its sixth session to be held in Havana in September 2003, responding to the call of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the decision of the second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, to request the Facility to become a financial mechanism of the Convention and requests the Council of the Facility at its forthcoming meeting in November 2003 to make the necessary arrangements in this regard;

"4. *Encourages* the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to continue to collaborate closely and effectively to facilitate the financing of the full implementation of the Convention by the Facility so as to fully achieve the

objectives of the Convention in the area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation;

"5. *Invites* the Council of the Global Environment Facility at its May 2003 meeting to adopt the Operational Programme for the Prevention and Control of Desertification through Sustainable Land Management;

"6. *Emphasizes* that, in the light of the ongoing assessment of the implementation of the Convention, the affected developing-country parties need the full support of the Global Environment Facility and other partners for enabling activities in order to assist them in meeting their obligations under the Convention;

"7. *Welcomes* the successful third replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund and calls upon countries in a position to do so to make additional contributions in order to enable the Facility to continue to be responsive to the needs and concerns of recipient countries;

"8. *Notes with appreciation* the increased number of developing-country parties that have adopted their national, subregional and regional action programmes and urges affected developing-country parties that have not yet done so to accelerate the process of elaboration and adoption of their action programmes with a view to finalizing them as soon as possible;

"9. *Calls upon* the international community to contribute to the implementation of those programmes through the bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes that are available to implement the Convention, including contributions from non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and to support the efforts of the developing countries to implement the Convention;

"10. *Invites* all parties to pay promptly and in full the contributions required for the core budget of the Convention for the biennium 2002-2003, and urges all parties that have not yet paid their contributions for the year 1999 and/or the biennium 2000-2001 to do so as soon as possible in order to ensure continuity in the cash flow required to finance the ongoing work of the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

"11. *Calls upon* Governments, multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to contribute generously to the General Fund, the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties and welcomes the financial support already provided by some countries;

"12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provision for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, including the seventh ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies, in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005;

"13. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

"14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled 'Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa'."

3. At its 44th meeting, on 11 December, the Committee had before it a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.17, submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/C.2/57/L.57).

4. At the same meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Jan Kára (Czech Republic), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa" (A/C.2/57/L.89), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.17.

5. The Committee was informed that the statement of programme budget implications contained in document A/C.2/57/L.57 did not apply to draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.89.

6. Also at its 44th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.89 (see para. 9).

7. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Venezuela (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and Canada (see A/C.2/57/SR.44).

8. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.89, draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.17 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

9. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 56/196 of 21 December 2001 and other resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,[1]

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Italy for the organization of the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention in Rome, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, from 11 to 22 November 2002,

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[2] and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,[3]

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups and announced at the Summit,

Welcoming the outcomes of the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, held in Beijing from 16 to 18 October 2002, particularly the decision on making land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, a new focal area of the Facility,

Recognizing the strong commitment of the international community, demonstrated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, to make the Facility available as a financial mechanism of the Convention pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, and in this regard encourages the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, as the supreme body of the Convention, to take the appropriate decision to that effect at its next ordinary session in 2003,

Expressing its deep appreciation for the generous offer of the Government of Cuba to host the sixth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held at Havana in September 2003,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[4]

2. *Welcomes* the decision taken by the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility that the Facility shall be available to serve as a financial mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,[1] pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, if the Conference of the Parties to the Convention should so decide, and in this regard notes with satisfaction that the Assembly of the Global Environment Facility has requested the Council of the Facility to consider any such decision of the Conference of the Parties with a view to making the necessary arrangements;

3. *Invites* the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session, to be held at Havana in September 2003, responding to the call of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the decision of the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, to consider making the Facility a financial mechanism of the Convention as a means of promoting the availability of financial mechanisms, pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, while recognizing the complementary roles of the Global Environment Facility and the Global Mechanism in providing and mobilizing resources for the elaboration and implementation of action programmes;

4. *Encourages* the Conference of the Parties and the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to continue to collaborate closely and effectively to facilitate the financing of the successful implementation of the Convention by

---

[2] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[3] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[4] A/57/177.

supporting financial mechanisms such as the Facility so as to fully achieve the objectives of the Convention;

5. *Invites* the Council of the Global Environment Facility at its May 2003 meeting to finalize and adopt the operational programme for land degradation, particularly desertification and deforestation;

6. *Emphasizes* that, in the light of the ongoing assessment of the implementation of the Convention, the affected developing countries that are parties to the Convention need the full and effective support of the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, and other partners for capacity-building and other activities which assist them in meeting their obligations under the Convention;

7. *Welcomes* the successful and substantial third replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund which will provide additional resources necessary to enable the Facility to continue to be responsive to the needs and concerns of its recipient countries;

8. *Calls upon* all countries and other entities in a position to do so to make additional contributions to the Global Environment Facility;

9. *Notes with appreciation* the increased number of developing countries that are parties to the Convention and that have adopted their national, subregional and regional action programmes, and urges the affected parties that have not yet done so to accelerate the process of elaboration and adoption of their action programmes with a view to finalizing them as soon as possible;

10. *Invites* affected developing countries to place the implementation of their action programmes to combat desertification high among their priorities in their dialogue with their development partners;

11. *Notes with satisfaction* the steps being taken by affected developing countries that are parties to the Convention, with the assistance of international organizations and bilateral development partners, to implement the Convention and the efforts being made to promote the participation of all actors of civil society in the elaboration and implementation of national action programmes to combat desertification, and in that regard encourages countries to cooperate at the subregional and regional levels, as appropriate;

12. *Welcomes* the strengthened cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the Global Mechanism, and encourages further efforts in that regard for the effective implementation of the Convention;

13. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to contribute to the implementation of action programmes through, inter alia, the conclusion of partnership agreements as well as the bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes that are available to implement the Convention, including contributions from non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and to support the efforts of the developing countries to implement the Convention;

14. *Invites* all parties to pay promptly and in full the contributions required for the core budget of the Convention for the biennium 2002-2003, and urges all parties that have not yet paid their contributions for the year 1999 and/or the biennium 2000-2001 to do so as soon as possible in order to ensure continuity in the

cash flow required to finance the ongoing work of the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

15. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[5] the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[6] and encourages continuing cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

16. *Invites* the United Nations Development Programme to implement decision 2000/23 of 29 September 2000 of its Executive Board,[7] pertaining to the cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the United Nations Development Programme, in order to mainstream activities to combat desertification at the national, subregional and regional levels;

17. *Calls upon* Governments, and invites multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to contribute generously to the General Fund, the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties,[8] and welcomes the financial support already provided by some countries;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

19. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa".

---

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[6] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[7] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 15* (E/2000/35), part four.

[8] ICCD/COP (1)/11/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 2/COP.1, annex, paras. 7-11.